Tearing the *Thracian* singer, in their rage?
That is an olde deuise: and it was plaid,
When I from *Thebes* came last a conquerer.
The thrise three Muses, mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceast, in beggery?
That is some *Satire* keene and critticall,
Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
A tedious briefe Scene of young *Pyramus*
And his loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth?
Merry, and tragicall? Tedious, and briefe? That is hot Ice,
And wõdrous strange snow. How shall we find the cõcord
Of this discord?

Philost. A Play there is, my Lord, some ten words long;
Which is as briefe, as I haue knowne a play:
But, by ten words, my Lord it is too long:
Which makes it tedious. For in all the Play,
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragicall, my noble Lord, it is. For *Pyramus*,
Therein, doth kill himselfe. Which when I saw
Rehearst, I must confesse, made mine eyes water:
But more merry teares the passion of loud laughter
Neuer shed.

Thes. What are they, that doe play it?

Phil. Hard handed men, that worke in *Athens* here,
Which neuer labour'd in their minds till now:
And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories,
With this same Play, against your nuptiall.

The. And wee will heare it.

Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnlesse you can finde sport in their entents,
Extreamely stretcht, and cond with cruell paine,
To do you seruice.

The. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
Can be amisse, when simplenesse and duety tender it.

Goe

Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

Hip. I loue not to see wretchednesse orecharged;
And duety, in his seruice, perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweete, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He sayes, they can doe nothing in this kinde.

The. The kinder we, to giue them thanks, for nothing.
Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake.
And what poore duty cannot doe, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit,
Where I haue come, great Clerkes haue purposed
To greete me, with premeditated welcomes;
Where I haue seene them shiuer and looke pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,
And in conclusion dumbly haue broke off,
Not paying mee a welcome. Trust me, sweete,
Out of this silence, yet, I pickt a welcome:
And in the modesty of fearefull duty,
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Loue, therefore, and tong-tide simplicity,
In least, speake most, to my capacity.

Philost. So please your Grace, the Prologue is addrest.

Duke. Let him approach.

Enter the Prologue.

Pro. If wee offend, it is with our good will.
That you should thinke, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To shew our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despight.
We doe not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
Wee are not here. That you should here repent you,
The Actors are at hand: and, by their showe,
You shall know all, that you are like to knowe,